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UNCLAS HARARE 001139

SIPDIS

AF/PD FOR COX AND ROBERTSON, AF/S FOR KRAFT AND SCHLACHTER,
AF/RA FOR DIPALMA, INR/R/MR, NSC FOR JENDAYI FRAZER

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ZIM/FRENCH ELECTIONS; HARARE

1. Under headline "Europe's double standards exposed" the government-controlled weekly "The Sunday Mail" dedicated its May 12 editorial to stating that circumstances surrounding the outcome of the French election are no different from the disputed presidential poll in Zimbabwe. Excerpts:

"...The just-ended presidential elections in France made it very clear for everyone to see Europe's double standards. In the elections...President Chirac won over 82 percent of the votes against Le Pen's 18 percent. What is interesting in the elections is the way the whole of Europe united in making sure that Le Pen loses the elections. Even the French media united in making sure that Le Pen, who they consider to be threat to their country's interests, loses the elections.

"...By fighting to make sure that Le Pen loses, the people of France were defending their country's interests and what they did is exactly what the people of Zimbabwe did when they voted for President Mugabe... Mr. Tsvangirai is Zimbabwe's version of France's Le Pen. While the French describe Le Pen as a 'xenophobic candidate,' Zimbabweans describe Mr. Tsvangirai as a 'sellout...' It has been said before that Americans would not salute Osama Bin Laden if he wins elections in their country and surely there is nothing wrong when Zimbabweans say a British-sponsored party will never rule in Zimbabwe..."

SULLIVAN